

MULTICULTURAL LEADERSHIP FOR GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP OF PRINCIPALS IN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS IN BANGKOK

Boonnadda Jayanama¹

Abstract: The objectives of this research are 1) to ascertain the profiles of multicultural leadership for global citizenship for principals in international schools in Bangkok 2) to find out the gap between the actual practices and the ideal expectations of principals concerning multicultural leadership for global citizenship in international schools in Bangkok 3) to develop a strategic plan to enhance the multicultural leadership for global citizenship of principals in international schools in Bangkok. A questionnaire constructed by the researcher based on Lynch's (1989) educational goals in multicultural education for a global society was used. From the population of 83 principals, simple random sampling was conducted, and questionnaires were sent to 42 principals (50% of the population). 40 questionnaires were returned and used for data analysis. The major findings were as follows: 1) attitudes and values were rated to be the highest in all three dimensions, followed by skills, and then knowledge in the actual practices as well as ideal expectations of multicultural leadership for global citizenship of principals 2) significant gaps were found between the actual practices and ideal expectations of multicultural leadership for global citizenship in all three dimensions, namely knowledge, (-4.53**), skills (-6.10**), and attitudes and values (-5.24**), the highest being the dimension of skills. 3) gender affects multicultural leadership for global citizenship of principals in some sub-dimensions of attitudes and values. Women rated sub-dimensions such as encouraging abolition of environmental pollution and facilitating ability to judge history of one's own country within the context of world history significantly higher than men. 4) ethnic background affects multicultural leadership for global citizenship of principals in some sub-dimensions of skills and knowledge. Caucasian principals ranked significantly higher than Oriental principals in skills such as encouraging communication, problem-solving and conflict resolution. Oriental principals ranked significantly higher than Caucasian principals in cultivating an awareness of economic and power motivations in human relationships. Caucasian principals ranked significantly higher than Indian principals in encouraging understanding of differential impact of technology on people and biosphere. The findings along with extensive documentary research were integrated and developed into a strategic plan, verified by experts, and proposed to principals, administrators and other educators in various educational

settings to further enhance their multicultural leadership for global citizenship.

Rationale

The world is becoming a global village as boundaries and barriers disappear and countries become increasingly interdependent upon one another. Societies are becoming more multicultural, creating numerous challenges for today's leadership. Globalization of the world can be seen clearly in the field of education. Technological advances such as the internet and satellite education allow educators and learners to obtain information in myriad forms from all over the world.

As globalization continues to permeate our world, leaders must be able to provide teachers and staff with multicultural leadership that is responsive to their different needs, origins and backgrounds. According to Adler (2002), the competencies required for successful leadership in a multicultural context include cultural sensitivity, the ability to foster relationships, communication, synergistic problem solving skills, and the ability to negotiate across cultures. Leaders and educators must develop multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills in order to respond to both the problems and opportunities that arise from domestic demographic changes and globalization (Connerley and Pedersen, 2005).

In addition, due to the political, economic, environmental, natural and social disasters our world is facing, multicultural leadership needs to be exercised with a global approach. In order to meet the challenges of the 21st century, multicultural leadership should be working towards producing effective global citizens. Lynch (1989) calls for educators to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes and values concerning multicultural education in a global society. Oxfam (2006) defines global citizens as those people with flexibility, creativity, and proactive approaches to challenges. They need to possess the skills of problem-solving, decision-making, critical-thinking, communicating, and working in teams. Andrezejewski (1999) defines global citizenship as the "knowledge and skills for social and environmental justice" (p. 3-9).

As stated by the Ministry of Education, one of the goals of education reform in Thailand is "to enhance the knowledge of the Thai people, who will be endowed with the basic qualifications of global citizenship" (Office of the Educational Council, 2003). In this light, the efforts of educational leadership in Thailand should be directed towards developing attitudes of global citizenship, or producing global citizens. In Thailand's case, the increasing economic cooperation between nations in various regions and global communication facilitated by developments in information technology have nurtured the growth of international education services, as explained by Dr. Mathana Santiwat, the President of the Association of Private Higher Education Institutions of Thailand

¹ Ph. D. Candidate in Educational Leadership, Graduate School of Education Assumption University of Thailand

(APHEIT). Dr. Mathana also explained that international education has been developing into a distinctive entity in recent years, and continues to expand accordingly with the rapid development of information technology. Graduates can be perceived as world citizens and hence should be encouraged to study in diverse locales, in order to gain broader experience and deeper understanding of the ways of life in other countries, resulting in a progressive and enriching international education.

The direction above also emphasizes the significant role of English as a medium of education, leading to the rapid growth of English-language learning and teaching in Thailand. The number of international schools has increased, while universities have also added more international services filled with English programs.

As Phetdee (2009, para. 1) reports, international education in Thailand is set to grow 10 percent yearly and the government expects to have up to 100,000 foreign students enrolled here within five years, up from about 30,000 at present according to a senior Commerce Ministry official. In addition, Phetdee (2009, para 8) reports that Ms. Usa Somboon, President of the International School Association, has explained that in spite of the world economic recession, the student population in international schools has remained steady for the past few years. In international schools, multicultural leadership may be an approach used by leaders to enhance global citizenship in teachers and staff. This approach reminds multicultural educators and leaders of the importance of helping students as well as teachers develop awareness of global connectedness, and develop their sense of responsibility as global citizens (Chang, 2003). Recently, the leadership of the principal in international schools has been given increasing importance due to the culturally, ethnically and linguistically diverse teacher and student population in these schools. The role of the principal becomes the “main educational facilitator of the learning community” (Wilmore, 2002, p. 5).

First, how can principals use multicultural leadership to help teachers and other staffs develop global citizenship? Making global citizenship a reality is a challenging work in progress. Critics of global citizenship have argued that not all interpretations of global citizenship are positive. Parekh (2003) argues that global citizenship, often defined as an actual membership of a type of worldwide government system, is not practical and isolated from one's immediate community. Byers (2005), has criticized some potential implications of the term, depending on one's definition of it, since such definitions have provided support for the capitalist economic system that Byers emphasizes now dominates the world.

Though the ideal of developing global citizenship is claimed in numerous educational documents, it is often not operationalized, not clarified in standards, objectives or goals (Andrezejewski, 1996). Too frequently there is a gap between the actual practice of leaders and their idealized expectations. Hodgkinson (1997) refers to this gap as states of inadequacy, “the way things are and the way we want them to be”. Secondly, how does one bridge

the gap between the ideal and the real? One approach is to develop a strategic plan for multicultural leadership for global citizenship. As Andrezejewski (1997) stated, having clear objectives for global citizenship is the foundation for making it a reality. Few global leaders have made serious efforts at making this dream a reality. Robert Muller, former Assistant Secretary-General of the UN, laureate of the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education, and former Chancellor of the University of Peace established by the United Nations General Assembly in Costa Rica, has inspired young people from all over the world with his widely discussed ‘World Core Curriculum’ which outlines the global paradigm, world values, and schooling in global citizenship (Mayor, 1989).

Finally, after having reviewed the literature extensively on multicultural leadership for global citizenship, the researcher has concluded that there are few studies that address these critical areas. Hence, the researcher has determined the necessity of conducting a study to ascertain the profiles of multicultural leadership for global citizenship of principals in international schools in Bangkok. This study also determines the gap between their ideal expectations and actual practice, and informs the development of a strategic plan for multicultural leadership for global citizenship to be reviewed by principals, administrators, and educators in Thailand and around the world.

Scope and Significance of the Study

The study focused on the multicultural leadership for global citizenship of principals in international schools in Bangkok. From a population of 83 principals, simple random sampling was conducted and 42 questionnaires were sent to the principals. 40 questionnaires were returned and used for data analysis. A new era of challenges await the 21st century educational leader in the face of globalization, rapid change, and unpredictability. This research, the first of its kind in Thailand, generates understanding and insight concerning multicultural leadership for global citizenship for international schools in Bangkok. As there have been a dearth of such studies even outside of Thailand, the findings from this study will be beneficial to school leaders, educators, students, and parents, both in Thailand and abroad in gaining an enhanced understanding of the manner in which multicultural leadership is being utilized and implemented by international school leaders in Bangkok. As stated by Koichiro Matsuura (2007), Director-General of UNESCO, education filled with respect directs the development of future global citizens; hence the researcher has also developed a strategic plan that paves the way for principals to develop multicultural leadership, in order to produce effective global citizenship in teachers in educational settings.

Research Design and Methodology

The researcher ascertained the profiles of multicultural leadership for global citizenship of principals in international schools in Bangkok. In addition, the

researcher also determined the gap between the actual practices and ideal expectations of principals concerning multicultural leadership for global citizenship. To achieve the objectives and to obtain the data of this study, the researcher designed the questionnaire for multicultural leadership for global citizenship of principals in international schools in Bangkok by undertaking the following steps: the researcher first reviewed and studied the theories, practices, research findings and related literature on multicultural leadership and global citizenship, and second, the researcher applied the content of Lynch's (1989) educational goals in multicultural education for a global society to the questionnaire. The main purpose of the instrument is to assess the gap between the actual practice and ideal expectations concerning multicultural leadership for global citizenship of principals in international schools in Bangkok.

The questionnaire is divided into two parts: the first part concerns the personal data of the respondent and the second part assesses the knowledge, skills, and values and attitudes concerning multicultural leadership for global citizenship in terms of actual practices and ideal expectations of the respondents. There are altogether 36 items in the questionnaire. The first 13 items are related to knowledge, the second 10 items are related to skills, and the last 13 items are related to values and attitudes.

In order to ensure the validity of the instrument, the content of the questionnaire was validated by three experts before it was distributed to the samples. The researcher approached three experts with the following qualifications. 1) extensive experience in multicultural leadership for global citizenship 2) teaching experience in international school and 3) testing and measurement expertise. The reliability of the questionnaire was determined by enquiring 30 Assumption University lecturers in the Graduate School of Business to complete the questionnaires. Cronbach's coefficient alpha was determined to estimate internal consistency.

The population of this research is 83 principals from international schools in Bangkok. After conducting simple random sampling, 42 questionnaires (50% of the population) were distributed to the principals. Finally, 40 questionnaires were returned and used for data analysis. The data was analyzed by the statistical package of Statistical Package for Sciences (SPSS). The analysis of the data included both descriptive and inferential statistics. To determine the profiles of principals in international schools in Bangkok, descriptive statistics were used. In addition, the mean and standard deviation were used to determine the average of the responses of the respondents based on their actual practices and ideal expectations of multicultural leadership for global citizenship. To analyze the gaps between the actual practices and ideal expectations of principals concerning multicultural leadership for global citizenship in knowledge, skills and attitudes and values, the t-test was conducted. The t-test was also conducted to examine gender differences in the actual practices and ideal expectations concerning multicultural leadership for global citizenship of the

principals. Furthermore, the One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) or F-test, was employed to analyze the impact of ethnic background and number of years of work experience on multicultural leadership for global citizenship. The Scheffe Multiple Comparisons test was used to determine whether there were significant differences in the pairs.

Findings

After the data had been analyzed, the findings were presented as follows:

Research Objective One: Profiles of principals in multicultural leadership for global citizenship

The results indicated that attitudes and values were rated to be the highest in all three dimensions, followed by skills, and then knowledge in the actual practice as well as ideal expectations of multicultural leadership for global citizenship of principals in international schools in Bangkok.

Research Objective Two: Gap analysis between actual practice and ideal expectations of multicultural leadership for global citizenship

The researcher found significant gaps between the actual practice and ideal expectations of multicultural leadership for global citizenship in all 3 dimensions namely knowledge (-4.53**), skills (- 6.10**), and attitudes and values (-5.24**), the highest being the dimension of skills. In detail, there were significant gaps in some sub-dimensions of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of multicultural leadership for global citizenship.

For knowledge, gaps were found in the following sub-dimensions: 1. to provide awareness of similarities and differences of people 2. to facilitate understanding of impact of stereotypes 3. to cultivate awareness of economic and power motivations in relationships 4. to nurture understanding of production in market-non-market economies 5. to nurture understanding of production in Third world 6. to ensure understanding of problem of developing countries 7. to ensure understanding of East – West relationship.

For skills, gaps were found in the following sub dimensions: 1. to foster international political literacy and potential to engage in action of equity and human dignity in teacher 2. to develop integrity in the collection and evaluation of evidence for judgments 3. to encourage global political literacy 4. to encourage practice in communication, advocacy, problem-solving, conflict resolution 5. to develop advanced cognitive organization 6. to reinforce application of reflective values attitudes for balanced judgments 7. to encourage critical reflection and balanced response to countries portrayed by media 8. to develop decision-making and participatory skills as basis for reasoned judgments 9. to facilitate ability to judge own history in context of world history.

For attitudes and values, gaps were found in the following sub-dimensions: 1. to develop commitment to the values of pluralistic democracy, civil and human rights 2. to develop commitment to the values of pluralistic democracy, civil and human rights 3. to develop

responsibility for others and ecosphere 4. sharing common values and ideals 5. stimulate development of empathy 6. social commitment, economic and environmental responsibility as world citizen 7. to encourage appreciation of problems such as achievement of peace, abolition of environmental pollution, guarantee of human rights and cessation of exploitation of poor countries.

Gender affects multicultural leadership for global citizenship in some sub-dimensions of attitudes and values. It was found that in the actual practice of multicultural leadership for global citizenship, women had higher scores than men in the sub-dimension to encourage abolition of environmental pollution and also in the sub-dimension to facilitate ability to judge own history as situated within context of world history.

Ethnic background affects multicultural leadership for global citizenship in some sub-dimensions of skills and knowledge. Caucasian principals ranked significantly higher than Oriental principals in skills such as to encourage practice of skills such as communication, problem-solving and conflict resolution. For knowledge, Oriental principals ranked significantly higher than Caucasian principals in knowledge such as to cultivate an awareness of economic and power motivations in human relationships. In addition, Caucasian principals ranked significantly higher than Indian principals in knowledge such as to encourage understanding of impact of technology on people and biosphere.

The number of years of work experience affects the multicultural leadership for global citizenship of principals in some sub-dimensions of knowledge and attitudes and values. For knowledge, the sub-dimensions such as to foster potential to engage in actions of greater equity and human dignity were rated significantly lower for principals with more than 20 years of work experience compared with principals with 11 – 20 years of work experience and principals with less or equal to 10 years of work experience. For the sub-dimension to develop integrity in collecting and to evaluate evidence for informed judgment, principals with more than 20 years of work experience rated these sub-dimensions significantly lower than principals with less than 10 years of work experience.

In addition, for attitudes and values, the sub-dimensions to foster appreciation of rich diversity of human cultures, and to facilitate of sharing common human values and ideals were all rated significantly lower by principals with more than 20 years of work experience compared with principals with 11–20 years of work experience, and principals with less or equal to 10 years of work experience. Finally, the sub-dimensions to nurture informal responsibility for all human-beings, to foster appreciation of rich diversity of human cultures, to stimulate development of empathy, to enable teachers to develop social commitment, economic and environmental responsibility as world citizens, and to facilitate cessation of exploitation of poor countries were all rated significantly lower by principals with more than 20 years

of work experience compared with principals with 11 – 20 years of work experience.

Recommendations

Research Recommendations

Recommendations for further research were suggested as follows: 1. Since the results indicated that there are significant gaps between the actual practices and ideal expectations of principals in multicultural leadership for global citizenship, it would be beneficial to find out the obstacles that leaders encounter in their actual practices that prevent them from achieving their ideal expectations. 2. Since this research only studied the perspectives of principals, it would be useful to conduct student surveys and interviews in finding student perspectives and whether or not students view that their leaders possess multicultural leadership for global citizenship. 3. It is recommended that a study is conducted on the impact of the policies of the Ministry of Education on multicultural leadership for global citizenship in international schools. 4. It may be meaningful to conduct another study on the actual practices and ideal expectations of multicultural leadership for global citizenship of principals in Thai schools in Bangkok.

Practical Recommendations

Results of the study put for the following recommendations: 1. based on the findings of this research study, regarding the multicultural leadership for global citizenship of principals in international schools in Bangkok, the attitudes and values of principals were rated to be the highest in all the dimensions. It is interesting to note that most human-beings work from their hearts before using their heads. Hence, it is recommended that leaders should find ways to inspire and motivate themselves in order to develop their knowledge and skills and become more effective leaders as a result. 2. Since the gap between actual practice and ideal expectations for multicultural leadership for global citizenship is highest in the dimension of skills, it is strongly recommended for leaders to be given numerous professional opportunities to develop and enhance their leadership skills. 3. In order to create global citizenship in students, first and foremost, leaders must aspire to be and model the essence of global citizenship. The researcher should present this research study to the Ministry of Education in order for the Ministry to adopt and propose important policies that will help enhance multicultural leadership for educators and leaders in international institutions in Bangkok and all over Thailand.

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